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ESSAY ON MAN,

UNIVERSAL PRAYER,

AND

ELOISA TO ABELARD,

THREE CELEBRATED

POEMS.

By ALEXANDER POPE, Esq;



L O N D O N :

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A N
ESSAY ON MAN,
I N
FOUR EPISTLES,
T O
H. St. JOHN, LORD BOLINGBROKE.

ARGUMENT OF
EPISTLE I.

OF THE NATURE AND STATE OF MAN, WITH
RESPECT TO THE UNIVERSE.

OF MAN, in the abstract—I. That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things, VER. 17, &c. II. That man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the general order of things, and conformable to ends and relations to him unknown, v. 35, &c. III. That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends, v. 77, &c. IV. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice of his dispensations, v. 109, &c. V. The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world, which is not in the natural, v. 131, &c. VI. The unreasonableness of his complaints against providence, while on the one hand he demands the perfections of the angels, and on the other the bodily qualifications of the brutes; though, to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree, would render him miserable, v. 173, &c.

VII,

VII. That throughout the whole visible world, an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to man. The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that reason alone countervails all the other faculties, v. 207. VIII. How much farther this order and subordination of living creatures may extend, above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed, v. 233. IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride of such a desire, v. 250. X. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to providence, both as to our present and future state, v. 281 &c. to the end.



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ESSAY ON MAN,

EPISTLE I.

A WAKE ! my St. JOHN ! leave all meaner things
To low ambition, and the pride of kings.

Let us (since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us, and to die)
Expatriate free o'er all this scene of man ; 5

A mighty maze ! but not without a plan ;
A wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot ;
Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.

Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield ; 10

The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar ;
Eye nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies ;
And catch the manners living as they rise ;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can ; 15
But vindicate the ways of God to man.

I. Say first, of God above, or man below,
What can we reason, but from what we know ?
Of man, what see we but his station here,
From which to reason, or to which refer ? 20

Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.

He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs, 25

What other planets circle other suns,
What vary'd being peoples ev'ry star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame the bearings, and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies, 30

Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd thro' ? or can a part contain the whole ?

Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee ?

II. Presumptuous man ! the reason wouldst thou find,
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind ? 36

First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less ?

Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade ? 40

Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
Why Jove's Satellites are less than Jove ?

Of systems possible, if 'tis consist
That wisdom infinite must form the best,

Where all must suit or not coherent be, 45
And all that rises, rise in due degree ;

Then, in the scale of reasoning life, 'tis plain,
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man :

And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong ? 50

Respecting man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all.

In human works, tho' labour'd on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain ;

In God's, one single can its end produce ; 55
Yet serves to second too some other use.

So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,

Touches some wheel, or veiges to some goal ;
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole. 60

When the proud steed shall know why man restrains
His fiery coarce, or drives him o'er the plains ;

When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Ægypt's god :

Then shall man's pride and culeness comprehend 65
His actions', passions', being's, use and end ;

Why doing, suffering, check'd, impell'd ; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity ?

Then

Ep. I. ESSAY ON MAN. 3

Then say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault ;
Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought : 70

His knowledge measur'd to his state and place ;
His time a moment, and a point his space.

find, If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
36 What matter, soon or late, or here or there ?
The blest to day is as completely so, 75
As who began a thousand years ago.

40 III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state :
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know :
Or who could suffer being here below ? 80

The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?
45 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.

Oh blindness to the future ! kindly giv'n, 85
That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n :
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,

50 A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world. 90

Hope humbly then ; with trembling pinions soar ;
Wait the great teacher death ; and God adore.
55 What future blifs, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.

Hope springs eternal in the human breast : 95
Man never Is, but always To be blest :

60 The soul, uneasy, and confin'd, from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

ns Lo, the poor Indian ! whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind ; 100

His soul, proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way ;

65 Yet simple nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n ;
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd, 105
Some happier island in the watry waste,

Where slaves once more their native land behold,
 No fiends torment, nor Christians thirst for gold.
 To be, contents his natural desire,
 He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire ; 110
 But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
 His faithful dog shall bear him company.

IV. Go, wiser thou ! and, in thy scale of sense,
 Weigh thy opinion against providence ;
 Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such, 115
 Say, here he gives too little, there too much :
 Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
 Yet cry, if man's unhappy, God's unjust ;
 If man alone ingross not Heav'n's high care,
 Alone made perfect here, immortal there : 120
 Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
 Re-judge his justice, be the God of God.
 In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies ;
 All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
 Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes, 125
 Men would be angels, angels would be Gods.
 Aspiring to be Gods, if angels fell,
 Aspiring to be angels, men rebel :
 And who but wishes to invert the laws
 Of ORDER, sins against th' Eternal cause. 130

V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
 Earth for whose use ? Pride answers, " 'Tis for mine :
 " For me kind nature wakes her genial pow'r,
 " Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r ;
 " Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew 135
 " The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew ;
 " For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings ;
 " For me, health gushes from a thousand springs ;
 " Seas roll to waft, suns to light me rise ;
 " My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies." 140

But errs not nature from this gracious end,
 From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
 When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
 Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep ?
 " No ('tis reply'd) the first Almighty cause 145

Ep. I. E S S A Y O N M A N.

5

“ Acts not by partial, bnt by gen’ral laws ;

“ Th’ exceptions few ; some change since all began :

“ And what created perfect ? ” — Why then Man ?

If the great end be human happiness,

Then Nature deviates ; and can Man do less ? 150

As much that end a constant force requires

Of show’rs and sun-shine, as of man’s desires ;

As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,

As men for ever temp’rate, calm. and wise.

If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav’n’s design,

Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline ? 156

Who knows but he, whose hand the light’ning forms,

Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms ;

Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar’s mind, 159

Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind ?

From pride, from pride, our very reas’ning springs ;

Account for moral, as for nat’ral things :

Why charge we Heav’n in those, in these acquit ?

In both, to reason right is to submit.

Better for us, perhaps, it might appear, 165

Were there all harmony, all virtue here ;

That never air or ocean felt the wind ;

That never passion discompos’d the mind.

But ALL subsists by elemental strife ;

And passions are the elements of life. 170

The gen’ral ORDER, since the whole began,

Is kept in Nature, and is kept in Man.

VI. What would this Man ? now upward will he soar

And little less than angel, would be more ;

Now looking downwards, just as griev’d appears 175

To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.

Made for his use all creatures if he call,

Say what their use, had he the pow’rs of all ;

Nature to these, without profusion, kind,

The proper organs, proper pow’rs assign’d ; 180

Each seeming want compensated of course,

Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force ;

All in exact proportion to the state ;

Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.

Ecu

Each beast, each insect, happy in its own :
 Is Heav'n unkind to man, and man alone ?
 Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
 Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all ?

The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
 Is not to act or think beyond mankind ;

No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
 But what his nature and his state can bear.

Why has not man a microscopie eye ?

For this plain reason, man is not a fly.

Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,

T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n ?

Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,

To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore ?

Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,

Die of a rose in aromatic pain ?

If nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,

And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,

How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still

The whispering Zephyr, and the purling rill ?

Who finds not Providence all good and wise,

Alike in what it gives, and what denies ?

VII. Far as Creation's ample range extends,

The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends :

Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,

From the green myriads in the peopled grass :

What modes of fight betwixt each wide extreme,

The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam :

Of smell, the headlong lioness between,

And hound sagacious on the tainted green :

Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,

To that which warbles thro' the vernal wood ?

The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine !

Feels at each thread, and lives along the line :

In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true

From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew ?

How instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,

Compar'd, half-reas'ning elephant, with thine !

'Twill

Ep. I. E S S A Y O N M A N. 7

Twixt that, and reason, what a nice barrier;
 For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near!
 Remembrance and Reflection how ally'd;
 What thin partitions Sense from Thought divide;
 And middle natures, how they long to join,
 Yet never pass th' insuperable line!
 Without this just gradation, could they be
 Subjected, th' se to those, or all to thee?
 The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,
 Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one?

VIII. See, thro' this air this ocean, and this earth,
 All matter quick, and bursting into birth.
 Above, how high, progressive life may go!
 Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
 Vast chain of Being! which from God began,
 Natures aethereal, human, angel, man,
 Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
 No glass can reach; from Infinite to thee,
 From thee to Nothing.—On superior pow'rs
 Were we to press, inferior might on ours:
 Or in the full creation leave a void,
 Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:
 From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,
 Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And, if each system in gradation roll
 Alike essential to th' amazing Whole,
 The least confusion but in one, not all
 That system only, but the Whole must fall.
 Let Earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
 Planets and Suns run lawless thro' the sky;
 Let u'ling Angels from their sphres be hurl'd,
 Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;
 Heav'ns whole foundations to their centre nod,
 And Nature trembles to the throne of God.

All this dread ORDER break—for whom? for thee?
 Vile worm!—oh madness! pride! impiety!

IX. What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,
 Or hand, to toil, aspir'd to be the head?

What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd
 To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
 Just as absurd for any part to claim
 To be another, in this gen'ral frame:
 Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains,
 The great directing MIND of ALL ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
 Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
 That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same;
 Great in the earth, as in the aethereal frame;
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
 Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
 Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
 As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
 As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
 As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns:
 To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
 He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

X. Cease then, nor ORDER Imperfection name:
 Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.

Know thy own point: This kind, this due degree
 Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.

Submit.—In this, or any other sphere,
 Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:
 Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,
 Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.

All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
 All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
 All discord, harmony not understood;
 All partial evil, universal good:

And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
 One truth is clear, "Whatever is, is RIGHT."

ARGUMENT OF
EPISTLE II.

OF THE NATURE AND STATE OF MAN, WITH RE-
SPECT TO HIMSELF AS AN INDIVIDUAL.

I. THE business of man not to pry into God, but to study himself. His middle nature; his powers and frailties, v. 1, to 19. The limits of his capacity, v. 19, &c. **II.** The two principles of man, self-love and reason, both necessary, v. 35, &c. Self-love the stronger, and why, v. 67, &c. Their end the same, v. 81, &c. **III.** The passions, and their use, v. 93, to 130. The predominant passion, and its force, v. 132 to 160. Its necessity, in directing men to different purposes, v. 165, &c. Its providential use, in fixing our principle, and ascertaining our virtue, 177. **IV.** Virtue and vice joined in our mixed nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident: What is the office of reason, v. 202 to 216. **V.** How odious vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, v. 217. **VI.** That, however, the ends of providence and general good are answered in our passions and imperfections, v. 238, &c. How useful these are distributed to all orders of men, v. 241. How useful they are to society, v. 251. And to individuals, v. 263. In every state, and age of life, v. 273, &c.

E P I S T L E II.

I. **K** Now then thyself, presume not God to scan,
 The proper study of mankind is Man.
 Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
 A being darkly wise, and rudely great :
 With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
 With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
 He hangs between ; in doubt to act, or rest ;
 In doubt to deem himself a God, or beast ;
 In doubt his mind or body to prefer ;
 Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err ;
 Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
 Whether he thinks too little, or too much :
 Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd ;
 Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd ;
 Created half to rise, and half to fall ;
 Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all ;
 Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurld :
 The glory, jest, and riddle of the world !
 Go wond'rous creature ! mount where science guides
 Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides ;
 Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
 Correct old time, and regulate the sun ;
 Go, soar with Plato, to th' empyreal sphere,
 To the first good, first perfect, and first fair ;
 Or tread the mazy round his follow'rs trod,
 And quitting sense call imitating God ;
 As eastern priests in giddy circles run,
 And turn their heads to imitate the Sun.
 Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule—
 Then drop into thyself, and be a fool !

Superior beings, when of late they saw
 A mortal man unfold all Nature's law,
 Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
 And shew'd a Newton as we shew an ape.

Ep. II. E S S A Y O N M A N. 11

Could he, whose rules the rapid comet bind, 35

Describe or fix one movement of his mind ?

Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,

Explain his own beginning, or his end ?

Alas what wonder ! Man's superior part

Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art ; 40

But when his own great work is but begun,

What reason waves, by passion is undone.

Trace science then, with modesty thy guide ;

First strip off all her equipage of pride ;

Deduct what is but vanity, or dress, 45

Or learning's luxury, or idleness ;

Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,

Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain ;

Expunge the whole, or lop th'excrecent parts ;

Of all our vices have created arts ; 50

Then see how little the remaining sum,

Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come !

II Two principles in human nature reign ;

Self-love, to urge, and Reason, to restrain ;

Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call, 55

Each works its end, to move or govern all :

And to their proper operation still,

Ascribe all good, to their improper, ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul ;

Reason's comparing balance rules the whole. 60

Man, but for that, no action could attend,

And, but for this, were active to no end :

Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,

To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot :

Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void, 65

Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Most strength the moving principles requires ;

Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.

Sedate and quiet, the comparing lies,

Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise. 70

Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh ;

Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie :

That

That sees immediate good by present sense ;
 Reason, the future and the consequence.
 Thicker than arguments, temptations throng,
 At best more watchful this, but that more strong.
 The action of the stronger to suspend
 Reason still use, to reason still attend.
 Attention, habit and experience gains ;
 Each strengthens reason, and self-love restrains:
 Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
 More studious to divide than to unite ;
 And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,
 With all the rash dexterity of wit.
 Wits, just like fools, at war about a name,
 Have sell as oft no meaning, or the same.
 Self-love and reason to one aspire,
 Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire ;
 But greedy that, its object would devour,
 This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r :
 Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,
 Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

III. Modes of Self-love the Passions we may call :
 'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all :
 But since not ev'ry good we can divide,
 And reason bids us for our own provide ;
 Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,
 Lift under reason, and deserve her care ;
 Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,
 Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name.

In lazy Apathy let Stoics boast
 Their virtue fix'd ; 'tis fix'd as in a frost ;
 Contracted all, retiring to the breast ;
 But strength of mind is exercise, not rest :
 The rising tempest puts in act the soul,
 Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.
 On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
 Reason the card, but passion is the gale ;
 Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
 He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind.

II. ESSAY ON MAN.

13

P. Passions, like elements, tho' born to fight,
 Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite:
 These 'tis enough to temper and employ;
 But what composes man; can man destroy?
 Suffice that reason keep to nature's road, 115
 Subject, compound them, follow her and God.
 Love, hope, and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,
 Hate, fear, and grief, the family of pain,
 These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,
 Make and maintain the balance of the mind: 120
 The lights and the shades, whose well accorded strife
 Gives all the strength and colour of our life.
 Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;
 And when, in act, they cease, in prospect, rise:
 Present to grasp, and future still to find, 125
 The whole employ of body and of mind.
 All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;
 On diff'rent senses diff'rent objects strike;
 Hence diff'rent passions more or less inflame,
 As strong or weak, the organs of the frame; 130
 And hence one MASTER PASSION in the breast,
 Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.
 As man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,
 Perceives the lurking principle of death;
 The young disease, that must subdue at length, 135
 Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his
 strength:
 So, cast and mingled with his very frame,
 The mind's disease, its RULING PASSION came;
 Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
 Soon flows to this, in body and in soul: 140
 Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,
 As the mind opens, and its functions spread,
 Imagination piles her dang'rous art,
 And pours it all upon the pecant part.
 Nature its mother, habit is its nurse; 145
 Will, spirit, faculties, but make it worse;

Reason

Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r;
As heav'n's blest beams turns vinegar more sow'r.

We, wretched subjects tho' to lawful sway,
In this weak queen, some fav'rite still obey:
Ah! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
What can she more than tell us we are fools?
Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend,
A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!
Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade
The choice we make, or justify it made;
Proud of an easy conquest all along,
She but removes weak passions for the strong:
So, when small humours gather to a gout,
The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.

Yes, nature's road must ever be prefer'd;
Reason is here no guide, but still a guard;
'Tis her to rectify, not overthrow,
And treat this passion more as friend than foe:
A mightier Pow'r the stronger direction sends,
And sev'ral men impels to sev'ral ends:
Like varying winds, by other passions tost,
This drives them constant to a certain coast.
Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,
Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease;
Thro' life 'tis follow'd, ev'n at life's expence;
The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
The monk's humility, the hero's pride,
All, all alike, find Reason on their side.

Th' Eternal Art educing good from ill,
Grafts on this passion our best principle:
'Tis thus the mercury of man is fix'd,
Strong grows the virtue with his nature mix'd:
The dross cements what else were too refin'd,
And in one int'rest body acts with mind.

As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear;
The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,
Wild nature's vigour working at the root.

II. Ep. II. E S S A Y O N M A N. 15
 What crops of wit and honesty appear 185
 From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!
 See anger, zeal and fortitude supply;
 150 Ev'n av'rice, prudence; sloth, philosophy;
 Lust, thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,
 Is gentle love, and charms all woman kind; 190
 Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
 Is emulation in the learn'd or brave;
 155 Nor virtue, male or female, can we name,
 But what will grow on pride, or grow on shame.
 Thus nature gives us (let it check our pride) 195
 The virtue nearest to our vice ally'd:
 Reason the byass turns to good from ill,
 160 And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.
 The fiery soul abhor'd in Catiline,
 In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine: 200
 The same ambition can destroy or save,
 And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.
 165 This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,
 What shall divide? the God within the mind.
 Extremes in nature equal ends produce, 205
 In man they join to some mysterious use;
 Tho' each by turns the other's bound invade,
 170 As, in some well-wrought picture, light and shade,
 And oft so mix, the difference is too nice
 Where ends the virtue, or begins the vice. 210
 Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,
 That vice or virtue there is none at all.
 175 If white and black blend, soften, and unite
 A thousand ways, is there no black or white?
 Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain; 215
 'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain.
 Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
 180 As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
 Yet seen too oft familiar with her face,
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace 220
 But where th' extreme of vice, was ne'er agreed:

Ask where's the North? at York, 'tis on the Tweed;
 In Scotland, at the Orcades; and there,
 At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lords knows where.
 No creature owns it in the first degree, 225
 But thinks his neighbour further gone than he;
 Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone.

Or never feel the rage, or never own;
 What happier natures shrink at with affright,
 The hard inhabitant contends is right. 230

Virtuous and vicious ev'ry man must be;
 Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree;
 The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise;
 And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.
 'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill; 235
 For, vice or virtue, self directs it still;
 Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal,
 But Heav'n's great view is one, and that the Whole.
 That counter-works each folly and caprice;
 That disappoints th' effect of ev'ry vice; 240
 That, happy frailties to all ranks apply'd;
 Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,
 Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,
 To kings presumption, and to crowds belief:
 That, virtue's ends from vanity can raise, 245
 Which seeks no int'rest, no reward but praise;
 And build on wants, and on defects of mind,
 The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.

Heav'n forming each on other to depend,
 A master, or a servant, or a friend, 250
 Bids each on other for assistance call,
 'Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.
 Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally,
 The common int'rest, or endear the tie.
 To these we owe true friendship, love sincere, 255
 Each home-felt joy that life inherits here;
 Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,
 Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign;
 Taught half by Reason, half by mere decay,
 To welcome death, and calmly pass away: 260

d; hate'er the passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,
 Not one will change his neighbour with himself.
 The learn'd is happy nature to explore,
 225 The fool is happy that he knows no more ;
 The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n, 265
 The poor contents him with the care of Heav'n.
 The blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
 The sot a hero, lunatic a king ;
 230 The starving chymist in his golden views
 Premely blest, the poet in his muse. 270
 See some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,
 And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend :
 The some fit passion ev'ry age supply,
 235 Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.
 Behold the child, by nature's kindly law, 275
 Lull'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw :
 Some livelier play-thing gives his youth delight,
 A little louder, but as empty quite :
 240 Pearls, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,
 And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age : 280
 Lull'd with this bauble still, as that before ;
 Till tir'd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.
 Mean-while opinion gilds with varying rays
 245 Those painted clouds that beautify our days ;
 Each want of happiness by hope supply'd, 285
 And each vacuity of sense by pride ;
 These build as fast as knowledge can destroy ;
 On folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy ;
 250 One prospect lost, another still we gain ;
 And not a vanity is giv'n in vain ; 290
 Given mean self-love becomes, by force divine,
 The scale to measure others wants by thine.
 See! and confess, one comfort still must rise ;
 255 'Tis this, tho' Man's a fool, yet God is wise.

A R G U M E N T O F

E P I S T L E I I I .

O F T H E N A T U R E A N D S T A T E O F M A N , W I T H
R E S P E C T T O S O C I E T Y .

I. **T**H E whole universe one system of society, v. 1. &c. Nothing made wholly for itself, nor wholly for another, v. 27. The happiness of animals mutual, v. 49. II. Reason or instinct operate alike to the good of each individual, v. 79. Reason or instinct operate also to society, in all animals, v. 109. III. How far society carry'd by instinct, v. 115. How much farther by reason, v. 128. IV. Of that which is called the state of nature, v. 144. Reason instructed by instinct in the invention of arts, v. 166. and in the forms of society, v. 176. V. Origin of political societies, v. 196. Origin of monarchy, v. 207. Patriarchal government, v. 212. VI. Origin of true religion and government, from the same principle, of love, v. 231, &c. Origin of superstition and tyranny from the same principle, of fear, v. 237, &c. The influence of self-love operating to the social and public good, v. 266. Restoration of true religion and government on their first principle, v. 285. Mixed government, v. 288. Various forms of each, and the true end of all, v. 300, &c.

E P I S T L E III.

HERE then we rest : " the universal cause
 " Acts to one end, but acts by various laws."
 All the madness of superfluous health,
 Trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,
 v. this great truth be present night and day ; 5
 or yet most be present, if we preach or pray.
 ima Look round our world ; behold the chain of love
 ke combining all below and all above.
 stin plastic nature working to this end,
 Ho single atoms each to other tend, 10
 much act, attracted to, the next in place
 called and impell'd its neighbour to embrace:
 by in matter next, with various life endu'd,
 n the to one centre still, the gen'ral good.
 socie laying vegetables life sustain, 15
 atriari life dissolving vegetate again ;
 e reli forms that perish other forms supply,
 e, o turns we catch the vital breath, and die)
 anny bubbles on the sea of matter born,
 The rise, they break, and to that sea return. 20
 pub ling is foreign ; parts relate to whole ;
 and all-extending, all-preserving soul
 Mixeects each being, greatest with the least ;
 and the e beast in aid of man, and man of beast ;
 erv'd, all serving : nothing stands alone ; 25
 chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.
 as God, thou fool ! work'd solely for thy good,
 joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food ?
 for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
 him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn : 30
 for thee the lark ascends and sings ?
 tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
 for thee the linnet pours his throat ?
 of his own and raptures swell the note.

The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain ?
The birds of heav'n shall vindicate their grain :
Thine the full harvest of the golden year ?
Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer :
The hog, that plows nor obeys thy call,
Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

Know, nature's children shall divide her care;
The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.
While man exclaims, " See all things for my use
" See man for mine !" replies a pamper'd goose :
And just as short of reason he must fall,
Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the pow'rful still the weak controul;
Be man the wit and tyrant of the whole :
Nature that tyrant checks ; he only knows,
And helps, another creature's wants and woes.
Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,
Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove ?
Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings ?
Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings ?
Man cares for all : to birds he gives his woods,
To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods ;
For some his int'rest prompts him to provide,
For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride :
All feed on one vain patron, and enjoy
Th' extensive blessing of his luxury,
'That very life his learned hunger craves,
He saves from famine, from the savage saves ;
Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast,
And, 'till he ends the being, makes it blest ;
Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,
Than favour'd man by touch ethereal slain.
The creature had his feast of life before ;
Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er !

To each unthinking being, Heav'n a friend,
Gives not the useless knowledge of its end :

III. ESSAY ON MAN.

21

Ep. man imparts it ; but with such a view
 while he dreads it, makes him hope it too :
 the hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,
 75
 which still draws nearer, never seeming near.
 that standing miracle ! that Heav'n assign'd
 only thinking thing this turn of mind.
 I. Whether with reason, or with instinct blest,
 how, all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best ; 80
 bliss alike by that direction tend,
 and find the means proportion'd to their end.
 , where full instinct is th'unerring guide,
 that Pope or council can they need beside ?
 reason, however able, cool at best,
 85
 serves not for service, or but serves when prest,
 says 'till we call, and then not often near ;
 the honest instinct comes a volunteer,
 ne never to o'er-shoot, but just to hit ;
 while still too wide or short is human wit ;
 90
 ere by quick nature happiness to gain,
 which heavier reason labours at in vain.
 his too serves always, reason never long ;
 he must go right, the other may go wrong.
 he then the acting and comparing pow'rs
 95
 he in their nature, which are two in ours ;
 and reason raise o'er instinct as you can,
 this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis man.
 Who taught the nations of the field and wood
 to shun their poison, and to chuse their food ? 100
 rescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
 build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand ?
 Who made the spider parallels design,
 are as De-moivre, without rule or line ?
 Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore 105
 Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown before ?
 Who calls the council, states the certain day,
 Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way ?
 III. God, in the nature of each being, sounds
 its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds : 110
 But

But as he fram'd a whole, the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness :
So from the first, eternal ORDER ran,
And creature link'd to creature, man to man.
Whate'er of life all-quick'ning æther keeps,
Or breathes thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,
Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds
The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds,
Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood,
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one.
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace ;
They love themselves, a third time, in their race.
Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
The mothers nurse it, and the fires defend ;
The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,
There stops the instinct, and there ends the care ;
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,
Another love succeeds, another race.
A longer care man's helpless kind demands ;
That longer care contracts more lasting bands :
Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,
At once extend the int'rest, and the love ;
With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn ;
Each virtue in each passion takes its turn ;
And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,
That graft benevolence on charities.
Still as one brood, and as another rose,
These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those :
The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect man,
Saw helpless him from whom their life began :
Mem'ry and fore-cast just returns engage,
That pointed back to youth, this on to age ;
While pleasure, gratitude, and hope, combin'd,
Still spread the int'rest, and preserv'd the kind.

IV. Nor think, in Nature's state they blindly trod
The state of nature was the reign of God :

Ep. III. E S S A Y O N M A N. 23

self-love and social at her birth began,
 Union the bond of all things, and of man. 150
 Pride then was not; nor arts, that pride to aid;
 Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;
 The same his table, and the same his bed;
 No murder cloth'd him, and no murder fed.
 In the same temple, the resounding wood, 155
 All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God:
 The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undrest,
 Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:
 Heav'n's attribute was universal care,
 And man's prerogative to rule, but spare. 160
 Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!
 Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;
 Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen'ral groan,
 Murders their species, and betrays his own,
 But just disease to luxury succeeds, 165
 And ev'ry death it's own avenger breeds;
 The fury-passions from that blood began,
 And turn'd on man a fiercer savage, man.
 See him from nature rising slow to art!
 To copy instinct then was reason's part; 170
 Thus then to man the voice of nature spake—
 "Go, from the creatures thy instructions take:
 "Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield;
 "Learn from the beasts the physic of the field;
 "Thy arts of building from the bee receive; 175
 "Learn of the mole to plow, the worm to weave;
 "Learn of the little Nautilus to sail,
 "Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
 "Here too all forms of social union find,
 "And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind: 180
 "Here subterranean works and cities see;
 "There towns ærial on the waving tree.
 "Learn each small people's genius, policies,
 "The ant's republic, and the realm of bees:
 "How those in common all their wealth bestow, 185
 "And anarchy without confusion know;

" And these for ever, tho' a monarch reign,
 " Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.
 " Mark what unvary'd laws preserve each state,
 " Laws wise as nature, and as fix'd as fate.
 " In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,
 " Entangle justice in her net of law,
 " And right, too rigid, harden into wrong;
 " Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.
 " Yet go! and thus o'er all the creatures sway,
 " Thus let the wiser make the rest obey;
 " And for those arts mere instinct could afford,
 " Be crown'd as monarchs, or as Gods ador'd."

V. Great Nature spoke; observant men obey'd;
 Cities were built, societies were made:
 Here rose one little state; another near
 Grew by like means, and join'd, thro' love or fear.
 Did here the trees with ruddier burdens bend,
 And there the streams in purer rills descend?
 What war could ravish, commerce could bestow,
 And he return'd a friend, who came a foe.
 Converse and love mankind might strongly draw,
 When love was liberty, and nature law.
 Thus states were form'd; the name of king unknown,
 'Till common int'rest plac'd the sway in one.
 'Twas VIRTUE ONLY (or in arts or arms,
 Diffusing blessings, or averting harms)
 The same which in a fire the sons obey'd,
 A prince the father of a people made.

VI. Till then, by Nature crown'd, each Patriarch
 King, priest, and parent of his growing state;
 On him, their second providence, they hung,
 Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
 He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,
 Taught to command the fire, controul the flood,
 Draw forth the monsters of th' abyfs profound,
 Or fetch th' ærial eagle to the ground.
 'Till drooping, sick'ning, dying they began
 Whom they rever'd as God to mourn as man:

Then,

Ep. III. E S S A Y O N M A N. 25

Then, looking up from fire to fire, explor'd
One great first father, and that first ador'd.

Or plain tradition that this All begun,

Convey'd unbroken faith from fire to son ;

The worker from the work distinct was known,
And simple reason never sought but one : 230

Ere wit oblique had broke that steady light,

Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right ;

To virtue, in the paths of pleasure trode,
And own'd a Father when he own'd a God.

Love all the faith, and all th' allegiance then ; 235

For Nature knew no right divine in men,

No ill could fear in God; and understood

A sov'reign being but a sov'reign good.

True faith, true policy, united ran,

That was but love of god, and this of Man. 240

Who first taught fools enslav'd, and realms undone,
Th' enormous faith of many made for one ;

That proud exception to all Nature's laws,

T'invert the world, and counter-work its cause?

Force first made conquest, and that conquest, law; 245

'Till superstition taught the tyrant awe,

Then shar'd the tyranny, then lent it aid,

And Gods of conqu'rors, slaves of subjects made :

She 'midst the lightning's blaze, and thunder's sound,
When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the
ground, 250

She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,

To Pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they :

She, from the rending earth and bursting skies,

Saw Gods descend, and fiends infernal rise:

Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes , 255

Fear made her devils, and weak hope her Gods;

Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust.

Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust ;

Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,
And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe. 269

Zeal then, not charity, became the guide ;

And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.

Then sacred seem'd th' etherial vault no more ;
 Alas ! grew marble then, and reek'd with gore :
 Then first the Flamen tasted living food ; 265
 Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood ;
 With heav'n's own thunders shook the world below,
 And play'd the God an engine on his foe.

So drives Self-love, thro' just and thro' unjust,
 To one man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust : 270
 The same self-love, in all, becomes the cause
 Of what restrains him, government and laws.
 For, what one likes if others like as well,
 What serves one will, when many wills rebel ?
 How shall he keep, what, sleeping or awake, 275
 A weaker may surprize, a stronger take ?
 His safety must his liberty restrain ;
 All join to guard what each desires to gain.
 Forc'd into virtue thus by self-defence,
 Ev'n kings learn'd justice and benevolence : 280
 Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,
 And found the private in the public good.

'Twas then, the studious head or gen'rous mind,
 Follow'r of God or friend of human-kind,
 Poet or patriot, rose but to restore 285
 The faith and moral, Nature gave before ;
 Re-lum'd her ancient light, not kindled new ;
 If not God's image, yet his shadow drew :
 Taught Pow'rs due use to people and to kings,
 Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings, 290
 The less, or greater, set so justly true,
 That touching one must strike the other too ;
 'Till jarring int'rests, of themselves create
 Th' according music of a well mix'd state.
 Such is the world's great harmony, that springs 295
 From order, union, full consent of things :
 Where small and great, where weak and mighty, made
 To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade ;
 More pow'ful each as needful to the rest,
 And, in proportion as it blesses, blest ; 300

Draw to one point, and to one centre bring
Beast, man, or angel, servant, lord, or king,

For forms of government let fools contest ;
Whate'er is best administer'd is best :

For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight ; 305

His can't be wrong whose life is in the right :

In faith and hope the world will disagree,

But all mankind's concern is charity :

All must be false that thwart this one great end ;

And all of God, that bless mankind or mend. 310

Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives ;

The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.

Or their own axis as the planets run,

Yet make at once their circle round the sun ;

So two consistent motions act the soul ; 315

And one regards itself, and one the whole.

Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'ral frame,

And bad self-love and social be the same.



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Ep. III. E S S A Y O N M A N.

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ARGUMENT

A R G U M E N T O F E P I S T L E IV.

O F T H E N A T U R E A N D S T A T E O F M A N , W I T H
R E S P E C T T O H A P P I N E S S .

I. **F**ALSE notions of happiness, philosophical and popular, answered from v. 19, to 77. II. It is the end of all men, and attainable by all, v. 36. God intends happiness to be equal; and to be so, it must be social, since all particular happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular laws, v. 37. As it is necessary for order, and the peace and welfare of society, that external goods should be unequal, happiness is not made to consist in these, v. 51. But, notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of happiness among mankind is kept even by providence, by the two passions of hope and fear, v. 70. III. What the happiness of individuals is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the good man has here the advantage, v. 77. The error of imputing to virtue what are only the calamities of nature, or of fortune, v. 94. IV. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general laws in favour of particulars. v. 121. V. That we are not judges who are good; but that, whoever they are, they must be happiest, v. 133, &c. VI. That external goods, are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of virtue, v. 165. That even these can make no man happy without virtue: Instanced in Riches, v. 183. Honours, v. 191. Nobility, v. 203. Greatness, v. 215. Fame, v. 235. Superior talents, v. 257, &c. With pictures of human infelicity in men possessed of them all, v. 267, &c. VII. That virtue only constitutes a happiness, whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, v. 307. &c. That the perfection of virtue and happiness consists in a conformity to the Order of Providence here, and a resignation to it here and hereafter, v. 326, &c.

E P I S T L E IV.

O H HAPPINESS! our being's end and aim!
 Good, pleasure, ease, content! whate'er thy
 name :

That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,
 For which we bear to live, or dare to die,
 Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies, 5
 O'erlook'd, scorn'd, double, by the fool, and wise.
 Plant of the celestial seed! if dropt below,
 Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
 Fair op'ning to some court's propitious shine,
 Or deep with di'monds in the flaming mine? 10
 Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian lawrels yield,
 Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?
 Where grows?—where grows it not? If vain our toil,
 We ought to blame the culture, not the soil:
 Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere, 15
 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where:
 'Tis never to be bought, but always free,
 And fled from monarchs, ST. JOHN! dwells with thee.

Ask of the learn'd the way? the learn'd are blind;
 This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind; 20
 Some place the bliss in action, some in ease,
 Those call it pleasure, and contentment these;
 Some sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain;
 Some swell'd to Gods, confess ev'n virtue vain;
 Or indolent, to each extreme they fall, 25
 To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less
 Than this, that happiness is happiness?

Take nature's path, and mad opinion's leave;
 A'l states can reach it, and all heads conceive; 30
 Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;
 There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;
 And mourn our various portions as we please,
 Equal is common sense, and common ease.

Remember, Man, "the universal Cause
 " Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;" 35
 And makes what happiness we justly call
 Subsist not in the good of one, but all.
 There's not a blessing individuals find,
 But some way leans and hearkens to the kind, 40
 No bandit fierce, no tyrant mad with pride,
 No cavern'd hermit, rests self satisfy'd :
 Who most to shun or hate mankind pretend,
 Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend :
 Abstract what others feel, what others think, 45
 All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink :
 Each has his share ; and who would more obtain,
 Shall find, the pleasure pays not half the pain.

ORDER is Heav'n's first law ; and this confess,
 Some are, and must be, greater than the rest, 50
 More rich, more wise ; but who infers from hence
 That such are happier, shocks all common sense.
 Heav'n to mankind impartial we confess,
 If all are equal in their happiness :
 But mutual wants this happiness increase ; 55
 All nature's difference keeps all nature's peace.
 Condition, circumstance is not the thing ;
 Bliss is the same in subject or in king,
 In who obtain defence, or who defend,
 In him who is, or him who finds a friend : 60
 Heav'n breathes thro' ev'ry member of the whole
 One common blessing, as one common soul.
 But fortune's gifts if each alike possess,
 And each were equal, must not all contest ?
 If then to all men happiness was meant, 65
 God in externals could not place content.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
 And these be happy call'd, unhappy those ;
 But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,
 While those are plac'd in hope, and these in fear : 70
 Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,
 But future views of better, or of worse.

Oh

Ep. IV. E S S A Y O N M A N. 31

Oh sons of earth ! attempt ye still to rise,
By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies ?
Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys, 75
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

Know, all the good that individuals find,
Or God and Nature meant to mere mankind,
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, health, peace, and competence. 80
But health consists with temperance alone ;
And peace, oh Virtue ! peace is all thy own.
The good or bad the gifts of fortune gain ;
But these less taile them, as they worse obtain.

Say, in pursuit of profit or delight, 85
Who risk the most, and take wrong means or right ?
Of vice or virtue, whether blest or curst,
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first ?
Count all th' advantage prosp'rous vice attains,
'Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains : 90
And grant the bad what happiness they wou'd,
One they must want, which is, to pass for good.

Oh blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,
Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe !
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best, 95
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.

But fools, the good alone, unhappy call,
For ills or accidents that chance to all
See Falkland dies, the virtuous and the just !
See god-like Turenne prostrate on the dust ! 100
See Sidney bleeds amid the martial strife !
Was this their virtue, or contempt of life ?

Say, was it virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,
Lamented Digby ! sunk thee to the grave ?
Tell me, if virtue made the son expire, 105

Why, full of days and honour, lives the sire ?
Why drew Marseille's good bishop purer breath,
When Nature sicken'd, and each gale was death !
Or why so long (in life if long can be)
Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me ? 110

What makes all physical or moral ill ?
 There deviates Nature, and here wanders will.
 God sends not ill ; if rightly understood,
 Or partial ill is universal good,
 Or change admits, or Nature lets it fall ; 115
 Short, and but rare, till man improv'd it all.
 We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain
 That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,
 As that the virtuous son is ill at ease
 When his lew'd father gave the dire disease. 120
 Think we, like some weak prince, th'eternal cause,
 prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws ?
 Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,
 Forget to thunder, and recall her fires ?
 On air or sea new motions be impress, 125
 Oh blameless Bethel ! to relieve thy breast ?
 When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
 Shall gravitation cease, if you go by ?
 Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,
 For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall ? 130
 But still this world (so fitted for the knave)
 Contents us not. A better shall we have !
 A kingdom of the just then let it be :
 But first consider how those just agree.
 The good must merit God's peculiar care ; 135
 But who, but God, can tell us who they are ?
 One thinks on Calvin Heav'n's own Spirit fell ;
 Another deems him instrument of hell ;
 If Calvin feel Heav'n's blessing, or its rod,
 The cries there is, and that, there is no God. 140
 What shocks one part will edify the rest,
 Nor with one system can they all be blest.
 The very best will variously incline,
 And what rewards your virtue, punish mine.
 Whatever is, is RIGHT.—This world, 'tis true,
 Was made for Cæsar—but for Titus too : 146
 And which more blest ? who chain'd his country, say,
 Or he whose virtue sigh'd to loose a day ?

“ But

" But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed." 150
What then ? is the reward of virtue bread ?

That, vice may merit, 'tis the price of toil ;

The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil,

115 The knave deserves it, when he tempts the main,
Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.

The good man may be weak, be indolent ; 155

Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.

But grant him riches, your demand is o'er ? (pow'r ?"

120 " No—shall the good want health, the good want
Add health, and pow'r, and ev'ry earthly thing,

" Why bounded pow'r ? why private ? why no king ?"

Nay, why external for internal giv'n ? 161

Why is not man a God, and earth a heav'n ?

125 Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive

God gives enough, while he has more to give :

Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand ; 165

Say, at what part of nature will they stand ?

What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,

130 The soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy,

Is virtue's prize : a better would you fix ?

Then give humility a coach and six, 170

Justice a conqu'ror's sword, or truth a gown,

Or public spirit its great cure, a crown.

135 Weak, foolish man ! will Heav'n reward us there

With the same trash mad mortals wish for here ?

The boy and man an individual makes, 175

Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes ?

Go, like the Indian, in another life

140 Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife :

As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,

As toys and empires, for a god-like mind. 180

Rewards, that either would to virtue bring

No joy, or be destructive of the thing :

How oft by these at sixty are undone

The virtues of a saint at twenty-one !

146 To whom can riches give repute, or trust, 185

ay, Content, or pleasure, but the good and just ?

But D Judges

Judges and senates have been bought for gold,
 Esteem and love were never to be sold.
 Oh fool ! to think God hates the worthy mind,
 The lover and the love of human-kind,
 Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
 Because he wants a thousand pounds a year.

Honour and shame from no condition rise ;
 Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
 Fortune in men has some small difference made,
 One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade ;
 The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,
 The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.

" What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl !"
 I'll tell you, friend ! a wise man and a fool.
 You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
 Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,
 Worth makes the man, and want of it, the fellow ;
 The rest is all but leather or prunella.

Stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings,
 That thou may'st be by kings, or whores of kings,
 Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,
 In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece :
 But by your father's worth if your's you rate,
 Count me those only who were good and great.
 Go ; if your ancient, but ignoble blood
 Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood,
 Go ! and pretend your family is young ;
 Nor own, your fathers have been fools so long.
 What can enoble fots, or slaves, or cowards ?
 Alas ! not all the blood of all the HOWARDS.

Look next on greatness : say where greatness lies.
 " Where, but among the heroes and the wise ?"
 Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,
 From Macedonia's madman to the Swede ;
 The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find
 Or make, an enemy of all mankind !
 Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,
 Yet ne'er looks forward further than his nose.

Ep. IV E S S A Y O N M A N . 35

No less alike the politic and wise ; 225

All fly slow things, with circumspective eyes :

190 Men in their loose unguarded hours they take.

Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.

But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat ;

'Tis phrase absurd to call a villain great : 230

Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,

195 Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.

Who noble ends by noble means obtains,

Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,

Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed 235

Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.

200 What's fame ? a fancy'd life in others breath,

A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.

Just what you hear, you have, and what's unknown

The same (my Lord) if Tully's, or your own. 240

204 All that we feel of it begins and ends

In the small circle of our foes or friends ;

To all beside as much an empty shade

An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead ;

Alike or when, or where, they shone, or shine, 245

Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.

210 A wit's a feather, and a chief a rod ;

An honest Man's the noblest work of God.

Fame but from death a villain's name can save,

As justice tears his body from the grave ; 250

When what t'oblivion better were resign'd,

215 Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.

All fame is foreign, but of true desert ;

Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart :

One self-approving hour whole years out-weighs 255

Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas ;

220 And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,

Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

In parts superior what advantage lies ?

Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise ? 260

'Tis but to know how little can be known ;

No To see all others faults, and feel our own :

Condemn'd in bus'ness or in arts to drudge,
Without a second, or without a judge :
Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land ? 265
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
Painful preheminance ! yourself to view
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring then these blessings to a strict account ;
Make fair deductions ; see to what they mount : 270
How much of other each is sure to cost ;
How each for other oft is wholly lost ;
How inconsistent greater goods with these ;
How sometimes life is risqu'd, and always ease :
Think, and if still the things thy envy call, 275
Say, would'st thou be the man to whom they fall ?
To fight for ribbands if thou art so silly,
Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.
Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life ?

Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus's wife: 280
If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind :
Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,
See Cromwell, damn'd to everlasting fame !
If all, united, thy ambition call, 285

From ancient story learn to scorn them all.
There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,
See the false scale of happiness complete !

In hearts of Kings, or arms of Queens who lay,
How happy those to ruin, these betray. 290

Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,
From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose.

In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,
And all that rais'd the hero, sunk the man :
Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold, 295
But stain'd with blood, or ill exchange'd for gold :
'Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,
Or infamous for plunder'd provinces,

Oh wealth ill-fated ! which no act of fame
E'er taught to shine, or sanctify'd from shame !

What greater bliss attends their close of life?
 Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,
 The trophy'd arches, story'd halls invade,
 And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.
 265 Alas! not dazzled with their noon-tide ray, 305
 Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day;
 The whole amount of that enormous fame,
 A tale, that blends their glory with their shame!
 270 Know then this truth (enough for man to know)
 "Virtue alone is Happiness below." 310
 The only point where human bliss stands still,
 And tastes the good without the fall to ill;
 Where only merit constant pay receives,
 Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives;
 275 The joy unequal'd, if its end it gain, 315
 And if it lose, attended with no pain:
 Without satiety, tho' e'er so blest'd,
 And but more relish'd as the more distress'd:
 280 The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears,
 Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears: 320
 Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,
 For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd;
 Never elated, while one man's oppress'd;
 Never dejected, while another's blest'd;
 285 And where no wants, no wishes can remain, 325
 Since but to wish more virtue, is to gain.
 See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow!
 Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know:
 Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
 290 The bad must miss; the good, untaught will find;
 Slave to no sect, who takes no private road, 331
 But looks thro' Nature, up to Nature's God;
 Pursues that chain which links th' immense design,
 Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine;
 295 Sees, that no being any bliss can know, 335
 But touches some above, and some below;
 Learns, from this union of the rising Whole,
 The first, last purpose of the human soul;

And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
All end, in LOVE of GOD, and LOVE of MAN. 340

For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,
And opens still, and opens on his soul;
'Till lengthen'd on to Faith, and unconfin'd,
It pours the blifs that fills up all the mind.
He fees, why Nature plants in Man alone 345
Hope of known blifs, and faith in blifs unknown :
(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)
Wife is her present ; she connects in this
His greatest virtue with his greatest blifs ; 350
At once his own bright prospect to be blest,
And strongest motive to assist the rest.

Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,
Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.
Is this too little for the boundless heart ? 355
Extend it, let thy enemies have part :
Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence :
Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
And height of blifs but height of charity. 360

God loves from whole to parts ; but human soul
Must rise from individual to the Whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;
The centre mov'd, a circle strait succeeds, 365
Another still, and still another spreads ;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace ;
His country next ; and next all human race ;
Wide and more wide, th'o'erflowings of the mind
Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind ; 370
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come then, my friend ! my genius ! come along ;
Oh master of the poet, and the song !
And while the muse now stoops, or now ascends, 375
To man's low passions, or their glorious ends,

The

Ep. IV. E S S A Y O N M A N.

39

Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,

340

To fall with dignity, with temper rise ;

Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer

From grave to gay, from lively to severe :

380

Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,

Intent to reason, or polite to please.

345

Oh ! while along the stream of time thy name

Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame ;

Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,

385

Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale ?

350

When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,

Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,

Shall then his verse to future age pretend

Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend ?

390

That urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art

From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart ;

355

For wit's false mirror held up Nature's light ;

Shew'd erring pride, Whatever is, is RIGHT ;

That REASON, PASSION, answer one great aim ;

395

That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the same ;

That VIRTUE only makes our blifs below ;

360

And all our knowledge is, OURSELVES TO KNOW.



T H E
UNIVERSAL PRAYER.
D E O O P T. M A X.

FATHER of all! in ev'ry age,
In ev'ry clime ador'd,
By faint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord,

Thou great first Cause, least understood :
Who all my sense confin'd
To know but this, that thou art good,
And that myself am blind ;

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill ;
And binding nature fast in fate,
Let free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heav'n pursue.

What blessings thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away ;
For God is paid when man receives,
T'enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,

UNIVERSAL PRAYER. 41

Or think thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round :

R. Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart,
Still in the right to stay ;
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has deny'd,
Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see ;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean tho' I am, not wholly so,
Since quick'ned by thy breath ;
Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Thro' this day's life or death.

This day, be bread and peace my lot :
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,
And let thy will be done.

To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies !
One chorus let all being raise ;
All nature's incense rise !

A R G U M E N T.

A BELARD and Eloisa flourished in the twelfth Century; they were two of the most distinguished persons of their age in learning and beauty, but for nothing more famous than for their unfortunate passion. After a long course of calamities, they retired each to a several convent, and consecrated the remainder of their days to religion. It was many years after this separation, that a letter of Abelard's to a friend, which contained the history of his misfortune, fell into the hands of Eloisa. This awakening all her tenderness, occasioned those celebrated letters (out of which the following is partly extracted) which give so lively a picture of the struggles of grace and nature, virtue and passion.

E L O I S A

T O

A B E L A R D.

IN these deep solitudes and awful cells,
 Where heav'nly-pensive contemplation dwells,
 And ever-musing melancholy reigns ;
 What means this tumult in a Vestal's veins ;
 Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat ? 5
 Why feels my heart its long forgotten heat ?
 Yet, yet I love !—From Abelard it came,
 And Eloisa yet must kiss the name.

Dear fatal name ! rest ever unreveal'd,
 Nor pass these lips in holy silence seal'd : 10
 Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
 Where mix'd with God's, his lov'd idea lies :
 O write it not my hand—the name appears
 Already written—wash it out, my tears !
 In vain lost Eloisa weeps and prays, 15
 Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.

Relentless walls ! whose darksome round contains
 Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains :
 Ye rugged rocks ! which holy knees have worn ;
 Ye grotts and caverns shagg'd with horrid thorn ! 20
 Shrines ! where their vigils pale-ey'd virgins keep,
 And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep,
 Tho' cold like you, unmov'd and silent grown,
 I have not yet forgot myself to stone.
 All is not Heav'n's while Abelard has part, 25
 Still rebel nature holds out half my heart ;

Nor

44 ELOISA TO ABELARD.

Nor pray'rs nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,
Nor tears for ages taught to flow in vain.

Soon as thy letters trembling I unclose,
That well-known name awakens all my woes. 30
Oh name for ever sad ! for ever dear !
Still breath'd in sighs, still usher'd with a tear.
I tremble too, where'er my own I find,
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.
Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow, 35
Led thro' a sad variety of woe :

Now warm in love, now with'ring in my bloom,
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom !
There stern Religion quench'd th' unwilling flame,
There dy'd the best of passions, Love and Fame. 40

Yet write, oh write me all, that I may join
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.
Nor foes nor fortune take this pow'r away ;
And is my Abelard less kind than they ?
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare, 45
Love but demands what else were shed in pray'r ;
No happier task these faded eyes pursue ;
To read and weep is all they now can do.

Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief ;
Ah, more than share it, give me all thy grief 50
Heav'n first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid ;
They live they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires,
The virgin's wish without her fears impart, 55
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the pole.

Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame,
When love approach'd me under Friendship's name ;
My fancy form'd thee of angelic kind, 60
Some emanation of th' all-beauteous mind.
Those smiling eyes, attempt'ring ev'ry ray,
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day.

Guiltless

ELOISA TO ABELARD. 45

Guileless I gaz'd; heav'n listen'd while you sung; 65

And truths divine came mended from that tongue.

30 From lips like those what precept fail to move?

Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love:

Back thro' the paths of pleasing sense I ran,

Nor wish'd an angel whom I lov'd a man. 70

Dim and remote the joys of saints I see;

35 Nor envy them that heav'n I lose for thee.

How oft, when prest to marriage, have I said,

Curse on all laws but those which love has made?

Love, free as air, at sight of human ties, 75

Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.

40 Let wealth, let honour, wait the wedded dame,

August her deed, and sacred be her fame;

Before true passion all those views remove;

Fame, wealth and honour! what are you to Love?

The jealous God, when we profane his fires, 81

45 Those restless passions in revenge inspires,

And bids them make mistaken mortals groan,

Who seek in love for aught but love alone.

Should at my feet the world's great master fall, 85

Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn 'em all;

50 Not Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove;

No, make me mistress to the man I love;

If there be yet another name more free,

More fond than mistress, make me that to thee! 90

Oh! happy state! when souls each other draw,

55 When love is liberty, and nature, law:

All then is full, possessing, and possess,

No craving void left aking in the breast: 94

Ev'n thought meets thought, ere from the lips it part,

And each warm with springs mutual from the heart.

61 This sure is bliss (if bliss on earth there be)

And once the lot of Abelard and me.

Alas how chang'd what sudden horrors rise!

A naked lover bound and bleeding lies! 100

Where, where was Eloise? her voice, her hand,

Her ponyard had oppos'd the dire command.

Barbarian,

46 ELOISA TO ABELARD.

Barbarian, stay ! that bloody stroke restrain ;
The crime was common, common be the pain.
I can no more, by shame, by rage suppress'd, 105
Let tears, and burning blushes speak the rest.

Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,
When victims at yon altar's foot we lay ?
Canst thou forget what tears that moment fell,
When, warm in youth, I bade the world farewell ?
As with cold lips I kiss'd the sacred veil, 111

The shrines all trembled, and the lamps grew pale :
Heav'n scarce believ'd the conquest it survey'd,
And saints with wonder heard the vows I made.
Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew, 115

Not on the cross my eyes were fix'd, but you :
Not grace, or zeal, love only was my call,
And if I lose thy love, I lose my all.

Come ! with thy looks, thy words, relieve my woe ;
Those still at least are left thee to bestow. 120

Still on that breast enamour'd let me lie,
Still drink del'cious poison from thy eye,
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd ;
Give all thou canst—and let me dream the rest.

Ah no ! instruct me other joys to prize, 125
With other beauties charm my partial eyes,
Full in my view set all the bright abode,
And make my soul quit Abelard for God,

Ah think at least thy flock deserves thy care,
Plants of thy hand, and children of thy pray'r. 130
From the false world in early youth they fled,
By thee to mountains, wilds, and deserts led.

You rais'd these hallow'd walls ; the desert smil'd,
And paradise was open'd in the wild.

No weeping orphan saw his father's stores 135
Our shrines irradiate, or emblaze the floors ;
No silver saints, by dying misers giv'n,
Here brib'd the rage of ill-requited Heav'n :

But such plain roots as Piety could raise,
And only vocal with the Maker's praise, 140

E L O I S A T O A B E L A R D. 47

In these lone walls (their days eternal bound)
 These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crown'd,
 Where awful arches make a noon-day night,
 And the dim windows shed a solemn light;
 Thy eyes diffus'd a reconciling ray, 145
 And gleams of glory brighten'd all the day.
 But now no face divine contentment wears,
 'Tis all blank sadness, or continual tears.
 See how the force of others prayer's I try,
 (O pious fraud of am'rous charity !) 150
 But why should I on others pray'r depend ?
 Come thou, my father, brother, husband, friend !
 Ah let thy handmaid, sister, daughter move,
 And all those tender names in one, thy love !
 The darksome pines that o'er yon rocks reclin'd, 155
 Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind,
 The wand'ring streams that shine between the hills,
 The grotts that echo to the tinkling rills,
 The dying gales that pant upon the trees,
 The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze ; 160
 No more the scenes my meditation aid,
 Or lull to rest the visionary maid.
 But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
 Long-sounding isles, and intermingled graves,
 Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws 165
 A death-like silence, and a dread repose :
 Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
 Shades ev'ry flow'r, and darkens ev'ry green,
 Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
 And breathes a browner horror on the woods. 170
 Yet here for ever, ever must I stay ;
 Sad proof how well a lover can obey !
 Death, only death, can break the lasting chain ;
 And here, ev'n then, shall my cold dust remain,
 Here all its frailties, all its flames resign, 175
 And wait till 'tis no sin to mix with thine
 Ah wretch ! believ'd the spouse of God in vain,
 Confess'd within the slave of love and man.

48 ELOISA TO ABELARD.

Assist me, heav'n ! but whence arose that pray'r ?
 Sprung it from piety, or from despair ? 180
 Ev'n here, where frozen chastity retires,
 Love finds an altar for forbidden fires.
 I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought ;
 I mourn the lover, not lament the fault ;
 I view my crime, but kindle at the view, 185
 Repent old pleasures, and solicit new ;
 Now turn'd to Heav'n, I weep my past offence,
 Now think of thee, and curse my innocence.
 Of all affliction taught a lover yet,
 'Tis sure the hardest science to forget ! 190
 How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,
 And love th' offender, yet detest th' offence ?
 How the dear object from the crime remove,
 Or how distinguish penitence from love ?
 Unequal task ! a passion to resign, 195
 For hearts so touch'd, so pierc'd, so lost as mine.
 Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,
 How often must it love, how often hate !
 How often hope, despair, resent, regret,
 Conceal, disdain,—do all things but forget. 200
 But let heav'n seize it, all at once 'tis fir'd ;
 Not touch'd, but rapt ; not waken'd, but inspir'd !
 Oh come ! oh teach me nature to subdue,
 Renounce my love, my life, my self—and you.
 Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he 205
 Alone can rival, can succeed to thee.
 How happy is the blameless Vestal's lot ?
 The world forgetting, by the world forgot :
 Eternal sun-thine of the spotless mind !
 Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd ; 210
 Labour and rest, that equal periods keep ;
 “ Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep ;”
 Desires compos'd, affections ever ev'n ;
 Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heav'n.
 Grace shines around her with sereneest beams, 215
 And whisp'ring Angels prompt her golden dreams.

For

ELOISA TO ABELARD. 49

180 or her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
 and wings of Seraphs shed divine perfumes,
 or her the spouse prepares the bridal ring,
 or her white virgins Hymenaeals sing, 220
 to sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,
 and melts in visions of eternal day.

185 Far other dreams my erring soul employ,
 Far other raptures, of unholy joy :

When at the close of each sad, sorrowing day, 225
 Fancy restores what vengeance snatch'd away,

190 Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,
 All my lose soul unbounded springs to thee.

Curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night !
 How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight ! 230

Provoking Daemons all restraint remove,
 And stir within me ev'ry source of love.

95 Hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,
 And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms:

Awake :—no more I hear, no more I view, 235
 The phantom flies me, as unkind as you.

Call aloud ; it hears not what I say :
 Stretch my empty arms ; it glides away.

20 To dream once more I close my willing eyes ;
 Yet soft illusions, dear deceits, arise ! 240

Alas, no more ! methinks we wand'ring go
 Thro' dreary wastes, and weep each other's woe,

05 Where round some mould'ring tow'r pale ivy creeps,
 And low-brow'd rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps.

Sudden you mount, you beckon from the skies ; 245
 Clouds interpose, waves roar, and winds arise.

Shriek, start up, the same sad prospect find,
 And wake to all the griefs I left behind.

For thee the fates, severely kind, ordain
 A cool suspense from pleasure and from pain ; 250

Thy life a long dead calm of fix'd repose ;
 No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows.

5 Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,
 Or moving spirit bade the waters flow ;

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Soft

50 ELOISA TO ABELARD.

Soft as the slumbers of a faint forgiv'n,
And mild as op'ning gleams of promis'd heav'n.

Come, Abelard! for what hast thou to dread?
The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.
Nature stands check'd; Religion disapproves;
Ev'n thou art cold—yet Eloisa loves.

Ah hopeless, lasting flames! like those that burn
To light the dead, and warm th' unfruitful urn.

What scenes appear where'er I turn my view?
The dear ideas, where I fly, pursue,
Rise in the grove, before the altar rise,
Stain all my soul, and wanton in my eyes.
I waste the Matin lamp in sighs for thee,
Thy image steals between my God and me,
Thy voice I seem in ev'ry hymn to hear,
With ev'ry bead I drop too soft a tear.

When from the censer clouds of fragrance roll,
And swelling organs lift the rising soul,
One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight,
Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight:
In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,
While altars blaze, and angels tremble round.

While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,
Kind, virtuous drops just gath'ring in my eye,
While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,
And dawning grace is op'ning on my soul:
Come, if thou dar'st, all charming as thou art!
Oppose thyself to Heav'n; dispute my heart;
Come, with one glance of those deluding eyes
Blot out each bright idea of the skies;
Take back that grace, those sorrows, and those tears
Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs;
Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode;
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God!

No, fly me, fly me, far as Pole from Pole;
Rise Alps between us! and whole oceans roll!
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,
Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee.

D. thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign ;
 2 forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.
 thy eyes and tempting looks (which yet I view !)
 ? long lov'd, ador'd ideas, all adieu ! 296
 Grace serene ! oh Virtue heav'nly fair !
 divine oblivion of low-thoughted care !
 2 fresh blooming Hope, gay daughter of the sky !
 n and Faith, our early immortality ! 300
 . enter, each mild, each amicable guest ;
 ? receive, and wrap me in eternal rest !
 See in her cell sad Eloisa spread,
 20 propt on some Tomb, a neighbour of the dead.
 each low wind methinks a Spirit calls, 305
 and more than Echoes talk along the walls.
 ere, as I watch'd the dying lamps around,
 om yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound.
 21 Come, sister, come ! (it said, or seem'd to say)
 Thy place is here, sad sister, come away ! 310
 Once like thyself, I trembled, wept, and pray'd,
 Love's victim then, tho' now a fainted maid :
 But all is calm in this eternal sleep ;
 27 Here grief forgets to groan, and love to weep,
 Ev'n superstition loses ev'ry fear ;
 For God, not man, absolves our frailties here " 315
 I come, I come ! prepare your roseate bow'rs,
 celestial palms, and ever-blooming flow'rs.
 28 hither, where sinners may have rest, I go,
 where flames refin'd in breasts seraphic glow : 320
 thou, Abelard ! the last sad office pay,
 and smooth my passage to the realms of day ;
 let my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll,
 tears check my last breath, and catch my flying soul !
 28 in no—in sacred vestments may'st thou stand, 325
 ; the hallow'd taper trembling in thy hand,
 present the Cross before my lifted eye,
 teach me at once, and learn of me to die.
 then, thy once-lov'd Eloisa see !
 will be then no crime to gaze on me. 330

52 ELOISA TO ABELARD.

See from my cheek the transient roses fly !
 See the last sparkle languish in my eye !
 'Till ev'ry motion, pulse, and breath be o'er ;
 And ev'n my Abelard be lov'd no more.
 O Death all-eloquent ! you only prove
 What dust we doat on, when 'tis man we love.

Then too, when fate shall thy fair frame destroy,
 (That cause of all my guilt, and all my joy)
 In trance extatic may thy pangs be drown'd,
 Bright clouds descend, and angels watch thee round,
 From op'ning skies may streaming glories shine,
 And saints embrace thee with a love like mine.

May one kind grave unite each hapless name,
 And graft my love immortal on thy fame !
 Then, ages hence, when all my woes are o'er.
 When this rebellious heart shall beat no more ;
 If ever chance too wand'ring lovers brings
 To Paraclete's white walls and silver springs,
 O'er the pale marble shall they join their heads,
 And drink the falling tears each other sheds ;
 Then sadly say, with mutual pity mov'd,
 " Oh may we never love as these have lov'd !"
 From the full choir when loud Hosannas rise,
 And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,
 Amid that scene if some relenting eye
 Glance on the stone where our cold relics lie,
 Devotion's self shall steal a thought from heav'n,
 One human tear shall drop, and be forgiv'n.
 And sure if fate some future bard shall join
 In sad similitude of griefs to mine,
 Condemn'd whole years in absence to deplore,
 And image charms he must behold no more ;
 Such if there be, who loves so long, so well ;
 Let him our sad, our tender story tell ;
 The well-sung woes will sooth my pensive ghost ;
 He best can paint 'm who shall feel 'em most.



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